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Thos. McCrie  
Edin.

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Thomas F. Torrance



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A  
D I S P L A Y  
O F T H E  
FRAUDULENT AND GROSS  
A B U S E S  
COMMITTED UPON THE  
SECESSION-TESTIMONY,  
I N

A Late Publication, entitled  
*The* RE-EXHIBITION *of the* TESTIMONY:

Containing some Strictures upon  
PERSECUTION AND TOLERATION.

---

*Fraude perit Virtus.*

OVID.

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E D I N B U R G H :

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and other Bookfellers.

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M,DCC,LXXX.

B I S P A Y

LONDON: 1810

A B U S E S

OF THE

RECESSION-TESTIMONY

A. B. Y.

OF THE

OF THE

OF THE

# ADVERTISEMENT.

ABOUT six years ago, A DISPLAY of the SECESSION-TESTIMONY was Published in two Volumes: And as the ASSOCIATE-SYNOD has never found any fault with that work,—from which the Author supposes, that he is not considered by them as having done any Injury to the Cause which he thereby endeavoured to serve; he may also suppose, that his prosecuting of this Endeavour, in a DISPLAY of the *prodigious Injury* which has been done to the said Testimony by the pretended RE-EXHIBITION of it,—will not be an unacceptable service.

EDINBURGH:

January, 14th  
1780.

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10. Note 1. 12. Read quoted;

17. 1. 9. Read forth

22. 1. 3. Read forth

26. 1. 2. From the foot, read given

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30. 1. 2. Read Counsellors,

38. 1. 3. After sort read of

A  
D I S P L A Y

C. F.

The *fraudulent* and *gross* ABUSES committed  
Upon the SECESSION-TESTIMONY,  
In a late Publication entitled  
*The RE-EXHIBITION of the Testimony.*

---

P A R T I.

A *General Account* of the RE-EXHIBITION, with  
regard to the SECESSION-TESTIMONY.

I. **T**HE complete *Title* of the very singular per-  
formance now to be considered, is as follows,  
*viz.*

“ The RE-EXHIBITION of the TESTIMONY : or, a  
“ connected view of those principles upon which a Se-  
“ cession from the *Judicatories* of the Church of Scot-  
“ land was stated, by several Ministers of the Gospel,  
“ in 1733 ; and, since that time, maintained by the As-  
“ sociate Synod : Containing, 1. A *Testimony* to the  
“ Doctrine, Worship, Government and Discipline of the  
“ Church of Scotland ; or REASONS, &c. &c. 2. *Act*,  
“ Declaration and *Testimony* of the Associate Presbytery ;  
“ to which is now added, an *Appendix*. 3. The *Libel*  
“ which was put into the hands of the Seceding Mini-  
“ sters by the General Assembly, with their *Answers*.  
“ 4. *Acts* and *Proceedings* of the Associate Presbytery,  
“ containing their *Declination*. 5. The *Act* of Assem-  
“ bly 1739, condemning the *Judicial Act* and *Declina-*  
B “ *ture* ;

“*ture*; with *Observations* thereon by the Associate Pres-  
 “bytery. 6. *Reasons* by Messrs *Erskine, Wilson, Mon-*  
 “*crieff* and *Fisher*, why they have not *acceded* to the  
 “Judicatories of the Established Church. 7. *Act* of the  
 “Associate Synod met at *Stirling*, Oct. 1747; declaring  
 “the *Nullity* of the *pretended Synod* that first met in  
 “Mr *Gib’s* house, *April* 10th. 8. *Act* of the Associate  
 “Synod met at *Stirling*; containing a *Narrative* of the  
 “*Rise, Progress* and *Grounds* of the *Secession*. With a  
 “*Preface* to this *new Edition* of these *Papers*. Publish-  
 “ed by order of the Associate Synod.”

The several Articles of these *Contents* (making about 300 pages of small and close print in large octavo) are, at the close of the performance, called *The foregoing Tracts,—The preceding Collection of Papers*.

II. These *Tracts* are said to be “published by order of the *Associate Synod*”; meaning what is called the *Burgher-Synod*, but should rather be called the *Burgessoath-Synod*. And if, according to the general title of the performance, it were only a “*New Edition* of these papers,”—or, according to the title of the general preface, “this *Edition* of the *Testimonies*”; it were somewhat uncommon, that the solemnity of a *Synodical Order* should have been interposed for the publication: However, as will be considered afterwards, there is more in it than a *new Edition*.

But the public is left utterly at a loss,—about how far the B-Synod make themselves answerable for the new matters of this publication. It contains nothing as their deed, but a short minute prefixed, dated “3d September 1778:” which bears, that they “resumed the affair of publishing the *Testimonies*, &c.—appointed Messrs *John Smith, John Belfrage, William Arnot* and *Robert Campbell*, as a committee to revise the *Preface* and *Appendix*, which had been laid before the Synod, together with the *Judicial Testimony* as now corrected; with power to publish said papers with all convenient speed.” The prefixed minute of the first meeting of the said committee (in which Mr *Belfrage* was not present) on the 28th of the same month, bears, —that

—that they “ read over the Preface and Appendix, and “ offered some observations on each ;” but how far these were accepted of, is not told. The prefixed minute of the second and last meeting of the committee (in which Mr *Arnot* was not present) on the 2d of *November* the same year, bears,—that they “ read over the Preface “ and Appendix, with the corrections of the Judicial Testimony, paragraph by paragraph ; corrected the language in some places, unanimously approved the whole, “ and appointed their clerk to write out a fair copy for “ the press, that those papers may be published with all “ convenient speed, agreeable to the order of Synod.”

—It thus appears that the B-Synod had seen none of these papers, as manufactured by their committee, till after the publication : And so, with regard to all the matters of the *Re-Exhibition* mentioned in their above minute, yea the whole of the publication,—they meanly skulk behind that committee, as immediately answerable for the whole.

Nor can the public judge, how far even that famous committee is answerable. For, beside the above papers, with others formerly published,—the *Re-Exhibition* contains various things, not mentioned in the Synodical minute ; of which the committee do not, by their minutes, take any burden : And which are therefore exposed without any owning them ; farther then as they may be laid to the door of Mr *Campbell* the committee-clerk,—or of the [*&c.*] in that Synodical minute.—As to the *Appendix*, of 19 pages, (by which these called *Antiburghers* are dragged in for a stroke,—along with the established Church, the *Antigovernment* party \*, the *Relief-party*, *Independents*, *Prelatists*, *Papists*, &c.) ; the large *Notes* which belong to it are somewhat of a doubtful original,—as it may be somewhat uncharitable to suppose, that they could have come from either the B-Synod  
or

\* In the appearance which they represent the Associate Presbytery as having made, against the *Antigovernment Scheme* ; they wholly overlook that large and most explicit Testimony given against it, in the controversy with Mr *Nairn*. But this, and some other most material parts of the Secession-Testimony, are now cast wholly out of it by the B-Synod ; as will be considered afterwards.

or their committee †. There are also five pages of a new *Introduction* to the Act about Nullity, which some individual takes upon himself,—without telling who he is : And, at the close of all, there are five pages of *Conclusions deducible from the foregoing Tracts* ; of which no author is any way notified.

III. It might have been supposed, that only papers of a public nature, as judicial deeds,—would have been set forth to Seceders, under the title of *the Re-Exhibition of the Testimony* : But the case is much otherwise.—What is called the *First Testimony* was never a public or judicial deed : and though the Associate Presbytery, upon having it read over in presbytery about six months after the publication of it, caused an *approbation* of it to be marked in their minutes,—as *their testimony*, and as *seasonably published* ; yet they never notified this to the world. The papers given in to them by Messrs *Thomas Mair* and *Ralph Erskine*, (though now printed under the running title of *the Judicial Testimony*) were never any part of the *Judicial Testimony*,—and were not first printed along with it by any Presbyterial appointment ; but merely allowed to be so, from the occasion of its being then a-printing : While these could be no more a part of that Testimony, than any papers of *Accession* afterwards given in by other ministers,—and by multitudes of people. The *Libel* against the Seceding ministers, and the *Act of Assembly* 1739 condemning the Judicial Testimony and Declinature,—are certainly no part of the Testimony : While the *Answers* to the one, and the *Observations*

† Though an individual has been found, it is hardly supposable that any Synod or committee could have been found,—capable of telling those of the *Relief-Scheme*, when combating their doctrine of Catholic Communion, as founded by them on the second section of the twenty-sixth chapter of our Confession of Faith ; that—“ it may not be improper to put them in remembrance, that our Confession speaks not here of *Church Communion*,—but of *Christian Communion*, in ministering with our substance, by *communicating* of it to supply the necessities of the saints, or in doing other offices of kindness ; as is fully evident from the Scriptures quoted by the Venerable Assembly at *Westminster*, in support of that article : ” While, yet, among these Scriptures, the following are first quoted ; *Heb.* x. 24, 25, *Acts* ii. 42, 46. *Isa.* ii. 3. *1 Cor.* xi. 20. !

*tions* upon the other,—were not judicial deeds. Nor did the *Reasons* of *non-accession* ever bear a judicial form, as of public authority in the Secession.

IV. The *Re-Exhibition* contains two *Acts* of the B-Synod, passed in the years 1747 and 1753: Acts so infamous, that they might well have become ashamed of them before this time,—after so much leisure for cool reflection; wishing to have them buried in perpetual oblivion. The first of these Acts, declaring a *nullity* of the true Associate Synod, in their restoration after the dismal rupture,—is wholly founded upon a system of the most gross and calumnious mis-representations: And, even abstracting from the consideration of the *nullified Synod* having the Secession-Testimony kept among their hands, which the *nullifying Synod* had dropt; it was a most shocking outrage upon the nature of Presbyterian Government, yea of all Government,—for *twelve* ministers to assume a power for nullifying a synod to which *nineteen* of their brethren belonged.—The other Act (especially in the latter part of it, about *the true scope and design of the Secession*) exalts the first or *extra-judicial Testimony*, with great disparagement of the *Judicial Testimony*,—all in favours of the Burgefs-oath; as the four brethren had more occasion in the first Testimony,—to make repeated mention of their *ordination vows and engagements*, and of *our beautiful Presbyterian constitution*: The great scope of this act being to prove, what no mortal ever denied;—that “ the “ Judicial Testimony and Bond” is not “ a renouncing “ and abjuring of the *true religion* professed and settled “ in this nation,” not “ a Secession from the true religion;” and that the Secession was “ not a Secession “ from the Revolution-church in her very constitution, “ considered in her *excellent constitution* and standards.” Not a Secession, forsooth, from the Protestant religion and Presbytery!—But there is no need for enlarging here; as the matter of these Acts (and of the following article) has been particularly considered in the *Display of the Secession-Testimony*.

V. The *Re-Exhibition* contains some violent thrusts at the Associate Synod, upon the controversy about the *religious*

*religious clause* of some Burgeſs-oaths; in a ſhameleſs repetition of ſeveral falſhoods which have been formerly expoſed, beyond all poſſibility of reaſonable contradiction.—The Synod had found, “ That a ſwearing the  
 “ *religious clause* of ſome Burgeſs-oaths \* by any under  
 “ their inſpection, as the ſaid *clause* comes neceſſarily in  
 “ this period to be uſed and applied, does not agree unto  
 “ the *preſent* ſtate and circumſtances of the Teſtimony  
 “ for religion and reformation,—which this Synod, with  
 “ thoſe under their inſpection, are maintaining; parti-  
 “ cularly, that it does not agree unto nor conſiſt with an  
 “ entering into the Bond for renewing our Solemn Cove-  
 “ nants:” And this Deciſion they have hitherto ſup-  
 ported, in oppoſition to a dreadful and deſperate Project,  
 pushed and pretended to be carried by a minority,—of  
 granting warrant for a *joint ſwearing* of the Burgeſs-  
 oath, and the oath of the Bond; promiſcuouſly *vouching*  
 the Seceſſion-Teſtimony by the one, and *abjuring* it by  
 the other. But what reproachful abuſes have they ſuf-  
 fered, what calumnious inveſtives have been ſpewed up-  
 on them,—for their honeſty in theſe matters! †

Paſſages are pretended to be quoted from their *pro-  
 ceedings*, with the uſual marks of quotation ‡,—which  
 are only an invidious gloſs upon their proceedings, thus  
 fraudulently impoſed upon the world as their language.  
 And they are charged with “ ſingularly extravagant, ir-  
 “ regular, and unprecedented conduct:” While theſe  
 charges are not founded upon any matters of *fact*, but  
 upon *absolute falſhoods* §. For,

They are charged with *condemning the religious clause*  
 of ſome burgeſs-oaths; called “ CONDEMNERS of the  
 “ *clause* as *ſinful*:” While they only condemned a  
 ſwearing of it by Seceders, in the *preſent* circumſtances.  
 They are called “ only a proteſting minority, 22 againſt  
 “ 32,”

\* *Viz.* “ Here I proteſt, before God and your Lordſhips, that I pro-  
 “ feſs, and allow with my heart, the true Religion preſently profeſſed  
 “ within this Realm, and authoriſed by the Laws thereof: I ſhall abide  
 “ thereat, and defend the ſame to my life’s end, renouncing the Ro-  
 “ man Religion called Papiſtry.”

† The erroneous and abſurd reproach which had been caſt upon them,  
 about Ruling-Elders, is ſtill repeated,—without offering to repel the  
 former vindication upon that head; and yet without ſhame.

‡ P. 262.

§ P. 174, 175, 260, 261, 262, 299, 304.

“ 32,”—at the time of the breach; Though it has been unanswerably manifested in the aforesaid *Display*, that they “ were not only the *majority* of *acting members* on that occasion; but they were also the *majority* of *all members* then present, who had any title to “ act in that affair” then debated. It is said, as to their going out from the minority who pushed and pretended to carry the forefaid dreadful Project,—that they “ withdrew themselves from the Synod, leaving the moderator behind them:” Whereas they only withdrew from the said minority; the moderator notoriously, in the face of a great multitude, going out along with them,—so as he returned not to the managers of that Project till the next day. It is told, “ that the true religion, was “ really settled at the Revolution;” and that “ the first “ four of the seceding ministers never stated a secession “ from the constitution of the Revolution-church (considered in her excellent Presbyterian constitution and “ standards), or that religion professed in it:” And these things are thrown out against the Associate Synod, as if they had denied or controverted the same; which they never did. They are said to have “ warmly contended, “ that the *true religion* mentioned in it” (the burgessoath), “ is to be understood as including all the *corruptions* “ of both church and state:” whereas they never contended, pretended, or alleged,—that the said *true religion*, abstractly, includes any one of these *corruptions*.—And they are said to have “ laboured to confound the “ TRUE RELIGION *professed* and *settled*, with the profession and settlement thereof; making, not the *true religion* ITSELF, but the PROFESSION and SETTLEMENT, the thing sworn to:” Whereas they never bestowed a moment upon any such labour; but always considered and treated these things as very different and distinct, not confoundable,—though as nearly connected as any thing can be with that which exhibits it.

At the same time, the author of the *Introduction* formerly mentioned, affirms a downright falsehood,—of which he appears to be the first deviser: That, in the course of the Synodical debate about the religious clause of some burgessoaths,

burgess-oaths, before the decision upon that subject ;  
 “ The defenders of the clause as lawful, for the sake of  
 “ peace, offered to condescend to an Act *discharging* Se-  
 “ ceders to swear this clause of the oath, as *inexpedient*  
 “ for them in the present circumstances, *viz.* of strife  
 “ and contention ;”—but that “ this pacific proposal, the  
 “ Antiburghers entirely rejected.” Yet the said pro-  
 posal (very different from one of their overtures which  
 he seems to refer unto) these Antiburghers could never  
 reject ; as it was never made.

The said *Introducer* readily allows, concerning the Sy-  
 nod before the breach,—that “ they had *stated a quarrel*  
 “ with the *manner*, in which the true religion is presently  
 “ professed and settled \* :” But he also tells us,—that “ it  
 “ was the *true*, the *divine* religion ITSELF, professed and  
 “ authorised in Scotland, that was sworn to in the oath,  
 “ and not the *faulty manner of professing and settling*  
 “ IT ; only “ that *divine thing* and *precious treasure*, the  
 “ TRUE RELIGION presently professed and authorised by  
 “ the laws of the land.” And thus, though the *true*  
*religion* is expressly defined in that oath by the *present*  
*professing* and *authorising* of it ; yet the oath, it seems,  
 ought not to be considered as meaning *any* concern  
 with the said profession and settlement !

It is upon such ridiculous reasoning, that the swearing  
 of the foresaid oath, by Seceders, is pretended to stand  
 in no contrariety to the Secession-Testimony,—or to the  
 avouching of it in the Bond for renewing our Covenants.  
 But if so,—what occasion had the B-Synod to fall a-  
 mangling this Testimony, in their Defence of that oath ?  
 And why has their defence of it proved a burial of so-  
 lemn covenanting among them ?——No less ridiculous is  
 the new attempt † to derive a warrant for the said oath  
 among Seceders,—from the late repeal of the penal  
 statutes

\* Let him try to reconcile this with the virulent reflection cast up-  
 on the Associate Synod (in the act of the B-Synod about the true  
*scope* and design of the secession), as if they had “ miserably perverted”  
 the Judicial Testimony ; by representing it as “ *stating a quarrel* with  
 “ the present national profession and settlement of religion.” But a  
 bad cause cannot well admit of consistency in defending it.

statutes against papists in England and Ireland, and the danger of such a thing taking place in Scotland. For if this argument can serve for any thing in the present controversy,—it must be to prove, that *Seceders* ought now to give up with their *secession*; or to fall from a stating of their Christian profession in the way of testimony against any public evils, but “ the Roman religion called Papistry.”

The true state of the case, about a present swearing of the foresaid religious clause, is this; that the Associate Synod considers it as amounting to an oath of formal and full *communion* with the *Established Church*: And as meaning that, whatever *faults* there are in the present national manner of professing and settling the true religion,—yet they are not *such* as can require or warrant any *separate* testimony against the same; or a testifying against them in a state of *secession* from that church. It is only in this respect, and in so far,—that they consider the oath as approving of, or engaging to support the present national profession and settlement of religion. But this true and natural state of the case, according to which it is most shocking to pretend that *Seceders* may consistently swear it,—is still most industriously shifted by the B-Synod, and all the writers on their side: All strenuously labouring, to have this plain matter of *fact* kept out of sight; while grievously abusing the Synod upon a plain matter of *falsehood*, about the amount and meaning of that oath.

It is however no wonder, that some new endeavours of this sort are used in the *Re-Exhibition*,—for the honour of the B-Synod: Seeing all their distinguishing constitution and profession is immediately stated upon the ground, and under the banner of the *burgefs-oath*: and it is evidently the general design of the *Re-Exhibition*, to support their character in that absurd condition.

VI. The *Re-Exhibition* is set forth as containing all that is acknowledged, by the B-Synod and their adherents, as belonging to the *Secession-Testimony*: For the *Testimony* said to be re-exhibited is evidently of this

general sense ; comprehending under it the *first Testimony*, and the *Judicial Testimony*,—with the other things mentioned in the title-page. It is therefore to be remarked, yea to be signally remarked, and remarked with deep concern,—that some things eminently belonging to the *Secession-Testimony* are entirely *left out* in this *Re-Exhibition*. The *Act about the Doctrine of Grace*, the *Act for renewing our Solemn Covenants*, the *Acknowledgement of Sins*, and the *Bond or Engagement to Duties*,—as also the *Answers to Mr Nairn*, with the subjoined *Declaration and Defence of the Associate Presbytery's Principles concerning the present Civil Government* ; these have no place in this *Re-Exhibition*, but are thereby *rejected and buried*. All these most material parts of the *Secession-Testimony* are therefore left to be considered as of no more account, among the people in subjection to the B-Synod, than so many old almanacks : And they must now be answerable for this killing and burying of these witnesses,—so far as they shall not be enabled to deliver their souls, by some proper way of disclaiming that same *Re-Exhibition*.

VII. The *Re-Exhibition*, as it means a *repeated exhibition*, should natively be considered as only a *new* exhibition or publication of what has been *formerly* exhibited or published. But this is by no means the case. For, beside the *new* things in it which have been taken notice of,—the *Judicial Testimony*, as thereby exhibited, is in many respects a *very new* thing ; what the world never saw before : While yet there is an entire concealment of every particular respect in which it is *new* ; yea, in the title-page of the *Re-Exhibition*, it is still called,—“ *Act, Declaration and Testimony of the Associate Presby-*  
“ *tery.*”

That *Testimony* has been long in great disrepute with the B-Synod, as an erroneous paper : And a great deal of talking there has been, for many years bygone,—about their being employed in correcting those errors ; for publishing it as a *new* or *reformed* *Testimony*. The *Re-Exhibition* has been accordingly puffed off in the public papers, after this manner, *viz.* “ As this publication  
“ has

“ has been long expected, it is not doubted but it will  
 “ be speedily purchased ; especially by all those who  
 “ have so earnestly wished to see it.” But how are  
 their people befooled, with regard to the long-expect-  
 ed and earnestly-wished-for *new Testimony*? The B-  
 Synod have indeed *been* long *with child*, as to this mat-  
 ter ; they *have been in pain* : And, after all, they have  
 done nothing better, but even much worse,—than *as it*  
*were brought forth* *wind*. For, instead of a *new* Testi-  
 mony, out comes the *old* Judicial Testimony : Wofully  
 indeed adulterated, but as a work of darkness ; while not  
 the smallest signification is made of what is corrected in  
 it, or where it is corrected, or what the corrections are :  
 It is given out, and imposed upon the world, in its *new*  
 adulterated state,—as still the *old* JUDICIAL TESTI-  
 MONY.

## P A R T II.

*A Particular Account of the RE-EXHIBITION, with  
 regard to the JUDICIAL TESTIMONY.*

### S E C T I O N I.

Of the PREFACE to the *Re-Exhibition*, as respecting the  
 Judicial Testimony.

**A**S it is the *historical* and *condemnatory* part of the  
 Judicial Testimony—which the B-Synod hath put  
 hand in ; the ground-work of that violence is laid in  
 the *preface*. And,

I. A dark cloud is cast over the *historical part* of the  
 Testimony, or it is thrown into a bewildering mist ; by  
 a wonderful specimen which the prefacers give of their  
 own historical abilities,—in the following terms, *viz.*

“ That our renowned forefathers strenuously con-  
 “ tended for the royal prerogatives of JESUS CHRIST,  
 “ who ALONE is King in Zion ; and that many of them  
 “ suffered imprisonment, banishment, and death ; in the  
 “ important struggle which they maintained against the  
 “ encroachments of ambitious and enterprizing ecclesi-  
 “ astics,

“astics, patronized by the powers of the world, cannot  
 “be denied by any who have, even a moderate ac-  
 “quaintance with the history of this church. But  
 “when the partizans of this new system of church-  
 “polity increased in numbers, and acquired additional  
 “strength, by every new accession to the party, they  
 “published with less reserve their designs with regard  
 “to the constitution of this church; and in proportion  
 “to the success which attended their former attempts,  
 “they pursued their pernicious plan with unwearied ar-  
 “dour, and repeated their assaults with more boldness  
 “and intrepidity. And as the present century hath  
 “produced a vast increase of numbers to this party  
 “within the bosom of a national church, who have at-  
 “tacked the inspired system of gospel-truth, with a de-  
 “gree of virulence and audacity almost unknown in for-  
 “mer times; the FOUR MINISTERS who formed the  
 “association, having, along with many hundreds of pri-  
 “vate Christians, frequently employed petitions and re-  
 “monstrances without effect, found themselves obliged,  
 “by the command of God and their ordination-vows,  
 “to withdraw from the prevailing party in the church.”

Now, the reader may, if he pleases, read this passage over and over,—and think and meditate upon it; to try if he can make common sense of it, or can reconcile it to the general truth of things. And for a help, he may take the following observations.

1. The above narration can have no sense;—but as taken for a historical sketch (short enough, indeed, in three sentences) of matters from the Restoration down to the year 1733; through a period of above 70 years.

2. The *first* sentence must be understood as a picture of the whole period of bloody persecution, from the *Restoration* to the *Revolution*. And in what important struggle was it, that the witnesses did then suffer. Why,—a “struggle against the encroachments of ambitious  
 “and enterprizing ecclesiastics, patronized by the pow-  
 “ers of the world:” A pretty way, truly,—to express a rebuilding of the cursed *Jericho* of abjured prelacy, upon the ruins of our covenanted reformation.

3. The

3. The history of the *second* Sentence must also begin at, or soon after the *Restoration*: But where it ends,—that is the question. It would seem, from the matter of it, that it should come no farther down than the *Revolution*: And yet, from the next sentence beginning with the *present century*, it would seem to come *twelve* years farther down,—to the close of the last century. Well, what sort of folk were the bloody persecutors before the Revolution? They were “the partizans of a new system of church-polity.” And they seem to have been but a weak party, when they first got into the saddle,—through a smallness of their number; during which time (we are not told how long) they behaved cautiously,—as “they published with reserve, their designs with regard to the constitution of this church.” But so, in process of time, they “encreased in numbers, and acquired additional strength by every new accession to the party:” And the consequence was, that “their designs” came to be “published with less reserve; they pursued their pernicious plan, and repeated their assaults with more boldness and intrepidity.”—But is this a proper account, or any account at all, of what took place under the reigns of the bloody brothers before the Revolution?

4. It is yet harder to know, what should be made of the *third* and last Sentence. The history of it begins with the *present century*, twelve years after the *Revolution*: So as every thing done by God and men, in that wonderful Revolution, is passed over with utter silence.—But, when such a gap is left, how are matters connected; as to what took place before and after the Revolution? As there is an odd history given of “the party” which prevailed before the Revolution; the history is carried on after the Revolution, as still the history of “this party,—a vast increase of numbers to this party, within the bosom of a national church.” And is it the same party, the *Prelatical* party, which has prevailed in both periods; are they all along “the partizans of this new system of church-polity,”—the same party, in both periods, that the friends of Reformation have had

had to struggle with? What then is become of the *Revolution*, or what has it served for?

5. The *four Ministers* who formed the *Association*,—are represented as having “found themselves obliged to” “withdraw from the prevailing party in the Church:” without a word about their having been thrust out of the communion of that Church.

But it is not worth while to rake further into this visionary and foppish stuff; a sort of burlesque upon the nature of history. And let the reader judge, how far the authors of it are able hands for new-modelling the historical part of the Testimony.

II. A nearer and more direct preparation is made for the particular attack upon the historical part of the Judicial Testimony,—by the following paragraphs, *viz.*

“It must be evident to an impartial reader, whose mind is not warped by prejudice, or under the influence of faction; that the most important branch of the Testimony is that in which the *truths of God* are solemnly asserted, and the contrary *errors* expressly condemned. It is properly in respect to *this*, that *Seceders* declare their united confession of the truth, as distinctly represented from the Holy Scriptures, in our adopted standards of *Doctrine, Worship, Government* and *Discipline*; in opposition to the repeated departures from this system, with which the great body of the nation is chargeable before God.”—

“It were to be wished indeed, that all who profess to bear Testimony to the truth as it is IN Jesus, had uniform and unexceptionable views of the divine favours vouchsafed to this Church, in the beginning and progress of her Reformation from Popery; as also of her general abuse of such distinguished privileges from age to age; that with one mind and mouth they might glorify God, by a grateful acknowledgment of the one, and a penitential confession of the other: But as this is scarcely to be expected in a militant church, especially in *these perilous times*; it becomes those concerned chiefly to know and profess what is of the utmost importance, the certainty of which rests upon the in-

“fallible

“ fallible record of God himself, and not on the fallible  
 “ narratives of men, which in themselves can never be  
 “ a sufficient ground of our faith. To be ignorant or  
 “ mistaken, with regard to the real existence of some  
 “ past transactions in the Church or State, transmitted  
 “ to us upon human authorities, some of which are con-  
 “ troverted by others of the same class, and others of  
 “ them covered with a cloud of uncertainty, which to  
 “ us, at this distance of time, is almost impenetrable, can  
 “ never be so criminal, as our ignorance or mistakes with  
 “ respect to the truths of God revealed in his word ;  
 “ especially, if such ignorance or mistakes proceed from  
 “ groundless prejudices, or unreasonable indolence.”

“ It must therefore be obvious to every sober and un-  
 “ biaſſed Christian, that an attempt, as in this edition of  
 “ the *Second Testimony*, to elucidate some historical re-  
 “ ferences, or even to omit others, which do not ap-  
 “ pear to be sufficiently vouched, cannot, with any de-  
 “ gree of candour and justice, amount to a DROPPING  
 “ of any part of the *Testimony*, AS it is a *Testimony* to  
 “ the truths of God revealed in his word ; notwithstand-  
 “ ing the unprovoked abuse which some have endea-  
 “ voured to throw upon such an attempt, with a mani-  
 “ fest design to support the credit of a tottering fabric.  
 “ To all such it will be sufficient to observe here, once  
 “ for all, what one of the original compilers of the *Tes-*  
 “ *timony* boldly avers ; That unless the principles adopt-  
 “ ed by that *Testimony* are proven to be contrary to  
 “ the word of God, and the received standards of this  
 “ Church ; any critical exception to the historical narra-  
 “ tions contained in it, does not, in the least, affect that  
 “ confession of the truths of God which is made by the  
 “ whole body of Seceders, but is rather a wrangling  
 “ about circumstances. See Mr WILSON’s Continua-  
 “ tion of his Defence, p. 150, 151.”

The above paragraphs contain a very smooth and sly prelude—to the particular abuses committed upon the Judicial Testimony. And for bringing the matters contained in them out of the mist, into an open view,—the following observations may suffice.

1. The *assertory part* of the Judicial Testimony, which is but about a *seventh* part of the whole,—is here set forth as the principal part of it: And the accessions which Seceders have made to the said Testimony, are represented as having been “properly in respect to *this*” part of it.

Now, as to the said part being “the most important branch of the Testimony,”—no body is so far “warped with prejudice, or under the influence of faction,” as to make a question of it; if this only mean, that the *truths of God* are of much greater importance than the *evils of men*!

But the whole warrant which the Associate Presbytery had for *making*, and which people had for *acceding* to the said *Affertion* of the truths of God in a way of *Secession*,—depended upon the truth and importance of the *historical* and *condemnatory* part of the Testimony. Abstracting from this, their testifying for the truths of God in a way of *Secession*,—would necessarily come to be considered as a criminal and scandalous *schism*. They could have no warrant for doing so, but according to the previous warrant which they had for a *Secession*,—upon the ground of the public evils narrated and condemned in the preceding part of the Testimony. So far as that preceding part is given up with or defamed, so far the *Secession* should be given up with: And so far, the *Assertory* part must fall out of a state of *Secession*; must fall back into a state of communion with the Established Church,—must be swallowed up in the pretended adherence of that Church to her Reformation-standards. It is therefore most evident, that the *historical* and *condemnatory* part—is “the most important branch of the Testimony,” even the very *fundamental* part of it, considered as a Testimony in a state of *Secession* from the Established Church.

2. It is a rude and injurious way of treating people, in a Protestant country; to argue with them for a preference of “the certainty which rests upon the infallible record of God himself,” to that “which rests” on “the fallible narratives of men:” As if any Protestant questioned that preference. It is also a rude and injurious

rious way of treating people, in a Christian country ; to argue with them upon a comparison betwixt “ the real “ existence of some past transactions in the Church or “ State,” and “ the truths of God revealed in his “ word ;” that “ to be ignorant or mistaken with regard “ to” the former, “ can never be so criminal as our ig- “ norance or mistakes with respect to” the latter : As if any Christian were otherwise minded.

It is nothing to the present purpose, to tell us that “ the narratives of men” are “ fallible ;” without proving that they have *actually fallen* into falsehood or error. It is as little to the present purpose to tell us,—that “ the fallible narratives of men, in themselves, can “ never be a *sufficient* ground of our faith ;” if this be meant of a divine saving faith, which none pretend that they can be any ground of at all.

But there is a human faith, a faith about human things, —which “ the fallible narratives of men,” bearing such evidence as the nature of the case requires and admits, must “ in themselves be a sufficient ground of ;” or there could be no subsistence of human society : As the concerns of both Church and State must, in many instances, depend upon *the witness of men*.—But especially, if “ the “ fallible narratives of men can never be a sufficient “ ground of faith” about human things ; what must become of all that obligation which Christians are under, to give glory unto him who is *a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him*,—by confessing, not only their own sins, but also the sins of their fathers? If they are not to do this upon “ the fallible narratives of men,” they cannot do it at all. And to teach people, that they may disregard all certainty which arises from these narratives, bearing such evidence as before expressed,—so as to have their confessions and testimony confined to what they have been eye and ear-witnesses of ; this indeed would make short work of witness-bearing for Christ against the wickedness of men : Making what has been, and consequently what will be, a matter of great indifferency to them.

And that Christians “ with one mind and mouth  
 “ might glorify God, by a grateful acknowledgment of”  
 the great things which he has done for us in days of  
 reformation,—“ and a penitential confession of” back-  
 slidings from the same ; is “ this scarcely to be expected  
 “ in a militant Church, and especially in *these perilous*  
 “ *times*,” even among those “ who profess to bear  
 “ Testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus!” And is it  
 not rather to be expected in *perilous times*, among *such*  
*professors* ; when common danger awakens them most  
 for such exercise ?——The days have been when the  
 whole Secession-body, so far as concerns the Judicial  
 Testimony, and according to the quaint stile now used,—  
 “ had uniform and unexceptionable views of the divine  
 “ favours vouchsafed to this Church, in the beginning  
 “ and progress of her reformation from Popery, as also  
 “ of her general abuse of such distinguished privileges  
 “ from age to age ;” so that they sweetly harmonised  
 in such “ grateful acknowledgment and penitential  
 “ confession” as hath been mentioned : And they conti-  
 nued to do so, till the B-Synod broke in upon this  
 harmony ; so as to get a number of them plunged into a  
 state of uncertainty and confusion about these matters ;  
 —all in favours of the Burgeſs-oath !

3. The general and milty flourishing which has been  
 considered, is in order to bringing home a stroke upon  
 the *historical* part of the *Judicial* Testimony. The mat-  
 ters there set forth, particularly these of an older date,  
 are the “ past transactions” meant,—as “ transmitted to  
 “ us upon human authorities : Some of which (we are  
 “ told) are contradicted by other” human authorities ;  
 “ and others of them covered with a cloud of uncer-  
 “ tainty, which to us, at this distance of time, is almost  
 “ impenetrable.” But it is astonishing, that any could  
 have the face to tell such a story : For it is absolutely  
 false, that any such *contradiction* was ever made ; while  
 the pretence now made, of such *uncertainty*, is absolute-  
 ly groundless,—and a most calumnious defamation.

The matters set forth in that *historical* part, are gene-  
 rally twofold ; instances of the Lord’s goodness, and of  
 what

what good he has enabled to do,—for matter of thankfulness: With instances of public evils, as standing grounds of the Lord's controversy,—for matter of humiliation before him. Now, whatever controversy or contradiction has taken place, about the *nature* of the things contained in these instances; yet the *fact* of these things is what none has ever presumed to controvert or contradict.—And how could they do so, or how could any *uncertainty* of these things be pretended; when they are things laid out in the most public and authentic histories and records of the kingdom. Yea, as is elsewhere observed; “there never was any case since the days of the Apostles, nor can be to the end of time, —in which people had or can have better evidence to proceed upon, in confessing the iniquity of their fathers:” Such evidence, that the *Prefacers* cannot point out so much as one instance of contradiction or uncertainty,—as to any substantial matter of fact.

4. The *Prefacers* acknowledge “an attempt, in this edition of the *Second Testimony*, to elucidate some historical references; or even to omit others, which do not appear to be sufficiently vouched.” But they give no particular account of what these *historical references* are, or of how they do *elucidate* them; nor of what these are which they *omit*, or upon what defect as to being *sufficiently vouched* \*. However, they plead that their “attempt cannot, with any degree of candour and justice, amount to a DROPPING of *any* part of the *Testimony*, AS it is a *Testimony* to the truths of God revealed in his word.” But they had no reason to be afraid in this case; as every body will have enough of “candour and justice” to admit of their plea, when it is taken into plain language: That the abuses committed by them upon the *historical* part of the *Testimony*, do not amount unto a dropping of the *assertory* part,—so far as concerns Bible-truths! How far the opposition made

to

\* They have indeed given the *Testimony* some appearance of such defect; for they have thrown out *thirteen* references which it originally contains, to *acts* of Parliament and *Watrow's History*,—as vouchers of what is narrated. It is odd to charge it with a want of vouchers, when depriving it of so many which it had.

to their scandalous dealings with that Testimony—deserves the character of “unprovoked abuse,” will be considered afterwards.

5. Were not the subject too serious for it, one could not well help laughing at the queer blunder which the *Prefacers* have fallen into ; of mistaking a passage referred to in Mr WILSON’s *Continuation of his Defence*, as if it were any way for them,—while it is all against them.—Neither he, nor any of his brethren, ever ascribed perfection to the Testimony ; or supposed it free from all circumstantial oversights. He knew therefore that it was liable to quibbling and wresting, and *wrangling about circumstances* ; particularly with regard “to the historical narrations contained in it :” While even the Holy Scriptures are not proof against such usage.—But it was odd for the Prefacers or B-Synod to imagine, that this passage could make any thing for them ; while it makes only for those against whom they level it,—as it means a reproof to themselves, for their attacks upon the said “historical narrations.”

## SECTION II.

Of the ABUSES committed, in the *Re-Exhibition*, upon the *Judicial Testimony*.

THE grievous injury done by the B-Synod, as to the *Secession-Testimony* in general, so to the *Judicial Testimony* (the *Act, Declaration and Testimony*) in particular,—is a matter of very melancholy consideration. After being exposed to the world for above forty years, the worst treatment it ever met with—has been in the house of these professed friends ; considering the great aggravation, of being met with among such hands.

Some members of the B-Synod at first insisted, that the burgeses-oath among Seceders—was in a state of perfect agreement with the said Testimony : But this pretence was soon give up. Under the banner of the said oath, that Testimony quickly fell into disrepute ; as chargeable with

with gross errors: And it has continued in a state of infamy on that side, for about thirty years bygone.

The account which it gives of the *settlement* and *profession*, or of the *authorised profession* of religion at the *Revolution*, was the thing principally found fault with; the chief subject of the abuse which it has suffered. And the most strenuous endeavours were used, to have that matter set forth in a fairer state; for agreeing better with an engagement of Seceders in the burghess-oath. But there was no real occasion for this, or for having the burghess-oath supported at such expence; nothing at all could be gained for it by such endeavours. For, let the authorised profession of religion at the Revolution be such as the Testimony represents it,—or let it be better, or let it be worse; this is all one matter with regard to the burghess-oath: Because it is properly to be considered as an oath of immediate communion with the Established Church; not simply as she was at the *Revolution*, or at the *Union*, or in any bygone period,—but still in her present condition. However, upon the Testimony becoming a great eye-sore, as to the Revolution-settlement; no pains have been spared to promote its infamy, or the credit of that abuse which had been first committed upon it,—by picking as many other holes in it as possible. Accordingly, while it was not convenient to discard it altogether, (though the *Appendix* shows no particular regard but to about a *seventh* part, the *assertory* part of that Testimony); it is now exhibited with a multitude of disparaging alterations.

Beside what are commonly called typographical errors, as to letters and points; there are about *seventy* differences, as to *words*,—in the way of omitting, adding, altering, and transposing. But as it doth not appear, how these could be *designed*; they are left to be considered as so many blunders fallen into by the Printer,—or by the committee-clerk, in his transcribing for the press. Only it may be observed, that the subject was entitled to a more careful attention.

There are also about *forty* alterations, which appear to have been designed; what the committee means, when

when telling that they have “corrected the language in “some places:” Though they will not readily get any sensible and impartial person to concur with them, in judging that these corrections are to the better. As the compilers of the Testimony despised foppery,—they did not need to learn propriety and dignity of expression, from such as our modern correctors. But seeing these alterations do not affect the matter, they may be passed over without any particular notice. It is observable, however, that the using of such freedoms with the language of a *Judicial Deed*—is no less unwarrantable than uncommon: And that these ought to be considered as so many WANTON *abuses* committed upon the Testimony,—treating it with great levity and contempt, wherever an affront could be rubbed upon it.

But there are other *abuses* committed upon it, which, as they are material, must also be considered as of a FRAUDULENT nature; and all of them equally groundless, tho’ not equally gross.—The Synodical minute, prefixed to the Re-Exhibition, speaks of the *Judicial Testimony as now corrected*; by which people would readily understand no more than a *correct edition* of it, correcting such errors of the Press as had crept into some former editions. The *Prefacers* are a little more plain; when they acknowledge “an Attempt, as in this edition of the “*Judicial Testimony*, to elucidate some historical references, “or even to omit others, which do not appear to be “sufficiently vouched.” But they keep the readers perfectly in the dark, concerning all these *elucidations* (in reality *overturnings*) and *omissions*: For, when one reads the Testimony as now *exhibited*,—he cannot find the smallest hint, even so much as in a note, of any alterations being made. As it bears the original subscription, [*Extracted by JAMES FISHER, Cls Pres.*]; so it begins with the original date, [*At Perth, the third day of December, One thousand seven hundred and thirty-six years*]: And the reader is left to take every sentence that he finds betwixt the date and subscription, from the first to the last line of the whole, as of the same antiquity; not any one sentence, more than another, as of any later

later composition than the 3d of December 1736. At the same time, considering the great discredit which the Testimony has been lying under on that side, for about thirty years bygone; the generality of the people now belonging to the B-Synod are to be supposed as unacquainted with it, in its original and authentic state, as with the *Turkish Alcoran*.—And when it is now exhibited in an adulterated or corrupted state, as also in the dark manner which has been mentioned; let any impartial person judge if a more FRAUDULENT *Imposition*, in any such case, could have been committed upon a people; while the reader is left incapable, as he reads it, of distinguishing these corruptions from the original state of the Testimony.

But some particular account must now be taken of these corruptions.—About twenty-five years ago, the B-Synod published [“ an overture; relative to some historical mistakes alledged to be in the Act, Declaration “ and Testimony,—Answers by the Associate Presbytery “ to Mr Nairn’s Reasons of Dissent,—and in the Acknowledgment of Sins prefixed to the Bond ]:” In which they distinguished these pretended *historical mistakes* into EIGHTEEN PASSAGES. And now, they fall upon *eighteen passages* to be corrected—in the *Testimony* alone; which are stated and considered, in the following articles. [N. B. In the several articles, T. stands for *Testimony*; and the annexed pages are these of the edition in the first volume of the *Display*: C. stands for *correction* or *corruption*; and the annexed pages are these of the edition in the *Re-Exhibition*.]

I. T. p. 55, 56. “ The *First Book of Discipline*—was “ approved by the Privy-council of Scotland, in the “ foresaid year 1560.”

C. p. 89. “ The *First Book of Discipline*—was approved “ by many of the Privy-councillors, in the year 1561.”

It is here set forth as an error, that the Book was approved by the *Privy-council*; being only, as is alleged, by *many of the Privy-councillors*.—But according to *Knox’s* and *Calderwood’s* Histories, hitherto reckoned sufficient authorities, the Book “ was subscribed by a great “ part

“ part of the Nobility :” And as to these “ that ruled the Court,” or Privy-councillors, it was “ subscribed by the most part with their own hands;” while the *most part* of them certainly made the *Privy-council* ! Moreover, the title-page of that Book, (as accurately printed in the *Collection of Confessions*, anno 1722) bears, that it was “ presented to the Nobility, anno 1560 ; and “ afterwards subscribed by the Kirk and Lords :” Yea the deed of subscription by the Lords, there recorded, bears this Title ; *Act of Secret Council, 17th of January, anno 1560.*

It is also set forth as an error, that the Book was approved in the year 1560 ; not having been, as is alleged, till the year 1561.—But, according to all accounts given of the matter in those days, it was in 1560 ; and it was so, according to the only method of calculation then, and long afterwards, in use. The year did then begin on the 25th of *March* ; so that the *January* in which the approbation took place, though the *first* month of the year 1561, according to the later way of reckoning,—was but the *tenth* month of the year 1560, according to the way of reckoning then used.

II. T. p. 56. “ All the pieces of Reformation *then attained unto*, were ratified and approved by the Parliament anno 1592.”

C. p. 89. “ All the pieces of Reformation” (as above) ; “ excepting that patronage, which was expressly condemned in the Second Book of Discipline, was approved by the said act of Parliament.”—But the undisguised matter of fact, with regard to that *exception*, is this, *viz.* In the 12th chapter of the Second Book of Discipline, bearing this Title, “ Certain general heads of Reformation which we crave,”—the abolishing of *patronage* was one of these *craved* ; but it had not been yet *attained unto*, in the year 1592 : And therefore it is still a certain truth, without any such exception,—that, by the said act of Parliament, all the pieces of Reformation *then attained unto* were ratified and approved.

III. T. p. 57. “ In the latter end of the foresaid year “ (1638), a free and lawful General Assembly met at  
“ *Glasgow* ;

\* *Glasgow* ; who deposed all, and excommunicated some  
 “ of the Prelates.”

C. p. 90.—“ Which deposed all the Prelates from their  
 “ pretended Episcopal function, and from the privilege of  
 “ sitting and voting in Parliament, council or convention,  
 “ in name of the Kirk ; suspended two of them from  
 “ the exercise of the ministerial office ; deposed all the  
 “ others from the office itself, and excommunicated eight  
 “ of them.”—And here is a pretence, of both correct-  
 ing an *error* and supplying a *defect* in the Testimony. But,

1. As Mr *Wilson* observes concerning the four brethren  
 in that Testimony, (*Def.* p. 320.) ; “ When the bre-  
 “ thren say they were *all* deposed, they speak according  
 “ to the title of the several acts relative unto them :  
 “ They speak likewise in the stile of all the writers at  
 “ that time ; and in the express words of the ministers  
 “ of *Perth* and *Fife*, in their Testimony.” The quoted  
 passage of the Judicial Testimony, as it respects the abo-  
 lishing of *Episcopacy*,—plainly means a deposing of *all*  
 the *Prelates* from their *Prelatical* state, or *Episcopal* func-  
 tion ; which was unquestionably done. As to the par-  
 ticulars added by the B-Synod, respecting these Prelates  
 in their *ministerial* office ; and how many of them were  
 excommunicated : These are neither of any importance  
 nor propriety, in that part of the Testimony.

2. Did the Assembly *depose* the Prelates “ from the  
 “ privilege of sitting and voting in Parliament, council  
 “ or convention, in name of the Kirk ?” Did they take  
 upon them to model and regulate the constitution of Par-  
 liament, council and convention,—as to who should have  
 a seat and vote there ; this privilege having been allowed  
 to the *Bishops*, properly considered as *Barons* of the re-  
 alm,—a state which the Parliament only could deprive  
 them of ? As to this matter, the Assembly did only depose  
 them from “ the office of Commissioners to vote in Par-  
 “ liament, council or convention, in name of the Kirk ;”  
 as their acts expressly bear. They only deprived these  
 Prelates of a *commission from the Kirk* so to vote, without  
 a word about their *sitting* ; leaving it to the Parliament,  
 to whom only it was competent, to deprive them of the

privilege of such sitting and voting,—pretendedly in name of the Kirk. And must the Testimony be defamed ; because it has not defamed that famous Assembly, in the manner now done by the B-Synod ?—As to the Prelates being deprived of the said office of *Commissioners* ; the Testimony did very properly leave this to be understood, in their deposition from their Episcopal function.

The same blundering correction is repeated (C. p. 102, 103) : where the Testimony repeats (p. 88.), as a contrast to the procedure of the Revolution-assembly ; that, “ by the Assembly that met *anno* 1638,—all the *Prelates*, “ being ringleaders in the apostasy, were deposed ; and “ some of them excommunicate.” And as the abuse of the Testimony is aggravated, by repeating that base correction ; so it is done with particular impertinence : For there was no occasion, with regard to the Revolution-assembly,—to take notice of deposing the Bishops “ from “ the privilege of sitting and voting in Parliament, council or convention, in name of the Kirk ;” as the Parliament had turned them out from that privilege, before the said Assembly met.

IV. T. p. 58. “ From this time (1638) till the year “ 1650, the building of the House of God went on prosperously and successfully.”

C. p. 90, 91.—“ The building of the House of God, “ in manifold instances, advanced prosperously and successfully : Though it must be acknowledged, that the “ enforcing of religious duties with civil penalties ; and, “ in too many instances, blending the affairs of Church “ and State with one another ; is totally inconsistent with “ the spiritual nature of Christ’s kingdom.”—And here the Testimony suffers very considerably ; in a pretended correcting of its extravagance : But it suffers in good company, along with a grievous defamation of our reforming ancestors. Two different matters are now to be considered : As the reasons given for correcting the Testimony, in the supposed extravagance of that commendation which it bestows upon our last reforming period.

1<sup>st</sup>, Our Reformers are blamed, as to “ the enforcing “ of religious duties with civil penalties.” But,

1. It is refused that ever they did so : The correctors are challenged to give so much as one instance, in all the public managements from 1638 to 1650,—of any religious duty as such, or any matter of religious duty distinctly considered, having ever been enforced by civil penalties. And the charge against our reformers, of their having acted a part, in this matter, “totally inconsistent “with the spiritual nature of Christ’s kingdom,”—is therefore a gross calumny. More particularly,

(1.) It is granted that, in the period referred to, the natural rights of mankind, about matters of conscience and religion, were not properly understood and acknowledged.—It is competent for, and incumbent upon the Church, to take cognizance of the religious principles and practices of her members ; and to proceed against them, as erroneous or undutiful in these matters, by the exercise of her discipline. But no religious duties can be warrantably enforced by civil penalties : No man can be justly subjected to any penalties of that sort, for any error of principle or iniquity of practice,—in religious matters as such. It is competent for and incumbent upon the Christian magistrate, to countenance true religion and discountenance false religion, to encourage the professors of the one and discourage the professors of the other ; to do so, by all means which may consist with men’s natural rights,—so as not to touch any one’s person or property, life or liberty, on a religious account. But it is grossly inconsistent with the sovereignty of the Lord Christ, the spirituality of religion, and the unalienable rights of conscience,—for the civil magistrate to make himself an authoritative judge of true and false religion, of religious principles and professions, for dealing compulsively with his people in such matters ; or that they should be any way accountable to him in the matters of their faith and worship, as such. A maintaining and promoting the public good of outward and common order, in all reasonable society through his dominions,—is the proper work of his office. If men are truly chargeable with principles or practices under the name of religion, which manifestly strike against the welfare of civil society,  
—or

—or are, according to the common principles of reason, subversive of the public peace ; the pretence of religion ought not to be any safeguard unto them in such a case : But it is the magistrates business to restrain or punish them as troublers of the civil state, or under the character of *bad subjects* : Yet still without assuming any cognizance of them as *bad Christians*, or using them with any compulsions in that respect ; as it is by a quite other sort of means, that men are to be reclaimed from religious errors or enormities.

It is too true, however, that considerably different views of this matter were entertained in the said reforming period : That our Reformers had not then got their minds sufficiently extricated from the bondage of those compulsory principles, in matters merely of conscience and religion, which had so long domineered in the Popish and Episcopal churches.—A sad evidence of this lies in an act of Assembly 1647, in which the following doctrine is taught ; “ That the civil magistrate may and  
 “ ought to suppress, by corporal and civil punishments,  
 “ such as, by spreading error or heresy, or by foment-  
 “ ing schism, greatly dishonour God, dangerously hurt  
 “ religion, and disturb the peace of the Kirk.” Here, indeed, the affair of civil penalties is doctrinally applied to matters of religion as such,—yea to matters of revealed religion as such ; whatever might be judged error or heresy or schism, though merely upon principles of Revelation. And if the magistrate was not to be degraded into a mere blind tool of the Church, he was to assume an authoritative judgment in these matters ; and whatever he should judge to be error or heresy or schism, he was to suppress by corporal and civil punishments. And whether his judgment be right or wrong, in this case,—the consequence must be all the same : Because what *really is* error or heresy or schism, and what he *judges to be so*, must be all one to him,—he must proceed alike upon what *is so*, and whatever he *takes to be so* ; as, according to the proverb, ‘ What is sauce for a  
 ‘ goose will be sauce for a gander.’—The persecuting and bloody tendency of this scheme, in itself considered, may  
 be

be obvious enough without further enlargement. But it is to be remarked with great thankfulness, that the Lord did not suffer it to take effect; so as the Presbyterian Church should have come to be stained with blood.

(2.) Principles and propositions of this sort, in which the minds of men, through some train of confused speculations, may be entangled,—will not always be a sufficient ground, for charging them with a persecuting or bloody disposition. We need go no farther for an evidence of this, than a late Publication from *London*, upon a most commendable design, entitled; “ An APPEAL from the  
“ Protestant Association to the people of Great Britain, concerning the probable tendency of the late Act of Parliament in favour of the Papists.” It may well be presumed, that the Gentlemen of this Association are as little chargeable with such a disposition as any other persons in our Island. Yet they have rashly injured the good cause which they plead,—by the following passage in their definitions of *persecution* and *toleration*. “ Persecution consists in hurting a man in any of his natural or civil rights,—on account of the principles he holds, or the worship he performs; when these principles and that worship, have nothing in them incompatible with the Scriptures:—Toleration—consists—in allowing every man to profess his own faith, if not evidently repugnant to the Holy Scriptures.” Now, it was very right, to define Toleration as consisting in a practical *allowing*, a not molesting; instead of consisting in an ACT, giving positive countenance and encouragement.

But, with regard to a man's religious principles and worship, or the faith which he professes,—who are, in this case, to be the judges; as to whether or not these have any thing in them “ incompatible with,” or “ evidently repugnant to the Holy Scriptures?” Certainly, the civil powers, to whom persecuting and tolerating belong. Yet, if they be allowed to assume such a judgment, they may persecute as much as ever Papists did; and yet never be chargeable, according to the above definitions, with any persecution at all; having no more ado for this, but first

to judge against the person in the things mentioned: And his plea for toleration will be good for nothing. The mistake lies, in allowing the civil judgment concerning such persons to turn upon any other question, than that of their being good or bad subjects and members of the civil state; troublers, or not, of the common peace.

(3.) Our Reformers, in the last century, had never any such case under consideration,—as that of enforcing religious duties, distinctly considered, by civil penalties; they never dealt, as they never had any occasion to deal in such a practice. The enemies of Reformation-work, whom they had to deal with, were, at the same time, enemies to the civil constitution and liberties of their country: And none of these were ever laid under any civil penalties on any religious account, simply considered; but as opposing the interests of religion, in the way of active malignancy against the public peace.

And it is very injurious to our Reformers,—to consider their principles and conduct upon that head, in the way of abstracting from their peculiar circumstances; or as the same principles and conduct would come to be considered in our circumstances. For it cannot be justly inferred, from any principles of compulsion which they stood upon, that they would have made the same application of these principles in such a period as the present; when people of different and opposite denominations in religion do all agree, in the common character of good and peaceable subjects of the civil state.

The kingdom of England was then laid under a dreadful inundation of sectaries, like a destroying army of locusts; *Anabaptists, Antinomians, Familists, Swenkfieldians, Seekers, Perfectionists, Libertines*: While these various parties did not endeavour to maintain their different principles and ways of worship in a peaceable manner, without offering any injury or disturbance to others; but were labouring, each, to bring ruin upon all others,—to throw the public state into universal confusion and distress. And must our Reformers be hardly censured, by such as now dwell at ease; because driven, perhaps, into some practical extremes,—as to their way of guard-  
ing

ing against a most imminent danger of such a horrid scene in this country.

After all, the *qualification* under which the Testimony commends our last reforming period—might have still sufficed, *viz.* “ But since the church, while militant, is in  
“ an imperfect state ; it is not hereby intended to affirm,—  
“ that, under the above mentioned period, there was  
“ nothing defective or wanting as to the beauty and order of the House of God ; or that there was nothing  
“ culpable in the administration.”

2. Though our late Reformers had been truly chargeable with enforcing religious duties by civil penalties, it very ill becomes the B-Synod to find fault with them for doing so : And it is truly a wonderful scrape which that Synod has fallen into, on this head.

In their *Appendix*, they condemn the General Assembly 1738,—for dismissing the process brought before them against Dr WILLIAM WISHART, late Principal of the University of Edinburgh ; on account of several doctrines which had been taught by him, and this among others, *viz.* “ That the civil magistrate hath no power to  
“ punish heresies of any kind ; but that his jurisdiction  
“ reacheth to those crimes only, which are committed  
“ against the state.” Now, while the Doctor was charged with other articles very grossly erroneous and pernicious ; that the above should have been brought in among them, as a subject of prosecution,—was a reproach to all who had a hand in it, a reproach to this country.—But what shall one think of the B-Synod in this case ? They condemn the above article of doctrine ; bringing it in under the character of a *dangerous sentiment*, a *pernicious principle*, a *heresy*. They must therefore be for the reverse, for ascribing to the civil magistrate *a power to punish heresies of every kind* : and so to *enforce religious duties by civil penalties*. Prodigious ! Are they not the same persons who have accused and abused our reforming ancestors, for entertaining the same principle which themselves now adopt ?

2dly, Our Reformers are blamed as, “ in too many instances, blending the affairs of Church and State with  
“ one

“ one another,—totally inconsistent with the spiritual nature of Christ’s kingdom.”

But what sort *blending* is meant? Is it according to the proper sense of the word; a *mingling* of these two affairs *together*, into a third thing compounded of both? Certainly no such *blending* ever was made, because it never could be made by them; they left these affairs still two different things as they had found them.—It must therefore to be a *blending* in the improper sense of the word, which is meant; a carrying on the affairs of Church and State, in a connection with one another: Especially as in the *National Covenant*, and afterwards in the *Solemn League and Covenant*. But was this criminal,—where all the competent powers; civil and ecclesiastical powers, were concurring? And was this “totally inconsistent with the spiritual nature of Christ’s kingdom;” more than it would be to take in the whole matter of duty in some Scripture-texts, (as *Matth. xxii. 21. 1 Pet. ii. 17.*), into the matter of one oath?—Our Reformers knew how they were circumstanced, and what was proper for them in these circumstances, better than we can pretend to do. And it becomes us to behave with a little modesty,—when judging about the propriety of their measures, in circumstances which we have no experience of.

And here is another wonderful scrape which the B-Synod has fallen into.—In their *Appendix*, they bring it forth as one of Mr GLASS’s *Errors*, which the church-judicatories have not duly testified against; “That our Covenants, National and Solemn League, were an unwarrantable confounding and blending of Church and State with one another.” Strange! They condemn our Reformers for having blended the affairs of Church and State with one another; and they also condemn Mr *Glass*, for saying that their doing so was unwarrantable!

V. T. p. 58. “The remarkable countenance which the Lord gave to the reforming and covenanting church of *Scotland*, did excite their neighbours in *England* and *Ireland*, to join with them in a *Solemn Covenant*; for maintaining, advancing and carrying on a work of reformation in the three kingdoms.”

C. p. 91. "The remarkable countenance which the Lord gave to the reforming and covenanting Church of *Scotland* at this time, was followed with a considerable reformation among their Protestant brethren in *England*; as also among a vast number of them in *Ireland*. The consequence was, that a great body of the former, and many thousands of the latter, united with her in a Solemn League and Covenant, for promoting and advancing a joint-reformation in the three kingdoms."

This correction sets forth the matter in somewhat of a different form, and with a good many more words. But to what advantage? So far as the alterations are not manifestly idle, they evidently serve for darkening the subject.—There was no need for adding *at this time*; when the matter is directly brought in under the period betwixt 1638 and 1650, as mentioned a few lines before. *Join with* is certainly more proper than *united with*; as there was then no union, of either the kingdoms or churches. What reason was there for throwing off the *influential* connection betwixt what took place in *Scotland*, and in the neighbouring kingdoms; by throwing out the consideration of the one *exciting* to the other; For one thing may be *followed with* another, without any sort of influence upon it? How comes the joining in the Solemn League and Covenant—to be set forth as immediately the consequence of reformation in *England* and *Ireland*; and not of the remarkable countenance which the Lord gave to the Reforming and Covenanting Church of *Scotland*, according to the truth of history? Upon what authority do they state such vague proportions, as to Reformation and Covenanting, betwixt *England* and *Ireland*; seeming to give the preference to the latter: When the Solemn League represents the matter differently; calling the state of the Church and kingdom of *Ireland* *deplorable*, while calling that in *England* *distressed*? And how come they to throw the *preservation* (or maintaining) of the Reformed Religion in the Church of *Scotland*, out of the Solemn League?

VI. T. p. 65. "The foresaid *Resolutions*, both of Church and State, were contrary to and condemned by the word of God."

C. p. 95. " This introduction of such persons into places of power and trust, was contrary to and condemned by the word of God."—And here, the Testimony of the witnessing Church of Scotland against the *Public Resolutions*, as a *Church-Evil*, is upon the matter given up: Retaining only a Testimony against the *State-Evil* which was consequent thereupon; the introducing of malignants into places of power and trust.

VII. T. p. 65, 66. " The most part of these who were for the *Public Resolutions* made defection unto Prelacy; whereas all the Protesters, except a few, stood firm against it: When, in the year 1662, this *curSED Jericho* was rebuilt."

C. p. 95.—" The greatest part of the Protesters, except a few," &c. And is *the greatest part except a few* a truer way, yea is it not a much less proper and sensible way of expressing the matter,—than *all except a few*? It is even rank nonsense. But, reason or none, it seems, the Testimony must be corrected.

VIII. We come now to the principal error of the Testimony, as is pretended; in the account which it gives of the *Revolution-Settlement*. And, for a distinct view of the matter, there must be a pretty large transcribing on both sides.

T. p. 86, 87. " When the PARLIAMENT of SCOTLAND met immediately after the Revolution, in the first session they abolished Prelacy; as a great and insupportable grievance to this nation, and contrary to the inclination of the generality of the people ever since the Reformation,—they having reformed from Popery by Presbyters. And in the second session of the same Parliament, anno 1690, Presbyterian Church-Government and Discipline is established and ratified; according to the civil ratification and establishment given unto the Government of this Church, anno 1592. Thus, a retrograde motion is made near an hundred years backward; and all the legal securities given to this Church in the Covenanting period, from 1638 to 1650, are overlooked and passed by. Likewise, all the acts of the first session of the first Parliament of King Charles II,

" together

“ together with the infamous *Act Rescissory anno 1661*, \*  
 “ (whereby a Covenanted Reformation was razed, and  
 “ the Acts and Deeds of that Covenanting period were  
 “ declared seditious and treasonable,)—are *left untouched*  
 “ *ed* in this above mentioned settlement.”

“ *Prelacy* is never considered *as contrary to the word*  
 “ *of God*, and abjured by our Covenants; nor our Pres-  
 “ byterian Church-Government and Discipline, as what  
 “ the land is bound and obliged to maintain by the  
 “ most solemn oaths and covenants. The indignities  
 “ done to the *National and Solemn League and Cove-*  
 “ *nant*, and consequently to the Most High God the  
 “ great party in them, are never regarded; but these  
 “ solemn Oaths and Covenants are left *buried* under an  
 “ act rescissory, and other acts and deeds subversive of  
 “ them.”

These two paragraphs are wholly retained, in the Re-  
 Exhibition: And this must be remembered, for com-  
 paring them with the following adulteration.

T. p. 87. “ If this nation, when an opportunity and  
 “ season was given them, and when the Lord gave such  
 “ a remarkable and wonderful deliverance unto them,—  
 “ did not resent the indignities and injuries done in the  
 “ former

\* By an original oversight in printing the Testimony, and not adverted to in following editions of it, (which has occasioned an inadvertency in Mr Wilson's Defence, p. 319.); 1661 has been put, in this place, for 1662.

Among the acts of the first session of that Parliament, *anno 1661*, there was an infamous *act rescissory*, (act 15th, referred to in the third article of the condemnatory part of the Testimony concerning the Restoration); by which the Parliaments of our Reforming period were *re-scinded* and annulled; and all acts and deeds past and done in them, without mentioning any particulars, are declared *void and null*. But another infamous *act rescissory* (mentioned in the Acknowledgement of sins under the character of *that impious and wicked act*), beside or different from the acts of the first session,—did pass in the second session of the said Parliament, *anno 1662*, (being act 2d, mentioned in the fourth article of the said condemnatory part); “ whereby a Covenanted Reformation was razed, and the acts and deeds of that Covenanting period were declared seditious and treasonable.” And particularly, the said act declares our Solemn Covenants to be—in themselves unlawful oaths; and therefore annuls all Acts and Constitutions, Ecclesiastical or Civil, approving the said Covenants, or making any interpretations thereof.”

“ former period, to that God whose awful and holy  
 “ name was interposed in these Solemn Oaths and Co-  
 “ venants; it is a righteous, just and holy dispensation  
 “ of providence,—that we should be *no more a nation* :  
 “ And that our noblemen, barons, and burgesſes, (who  
 “ had ſuch a golden ſeaſon and opportunity put into  
 “ their hands for honouring God, and doing juſtice to  
 “ that great name which was abuſed and profaned in  
 “ ſuch a dreadful and unparallelled manner,)—ſhould  
 “ for ever be deprived of the opportunity of *acting by*  
 “ *themſelves in a parliamentary capacity.*”

“ Likewise, by the ſame Parliament the *Oath of Al-*  
 “ *legiance* to the Sovereign is appointed to be ſworn,—  
 “ *in place of any other oaths impoſed by laws and acts of*  
 “ *preceding Parliaments* \*. Though it may be ſaid, that  
 “ this had a reſpect to the oaths impoſed during the perſe-  
 “ cuting period; yet the terms in which the Act is conceiv-  
 “ ed appear plainly to exclude the *Oath of the Covenant*,  
 “ which contained a very ſolemn teſt of allegiance to  
 “ the Sovereign: Eſpecially when it is conſidered, that  
 “ the above-mentioned *Act Reſciſſory* was not repealed.”

Now, theſe two paragraphs are wholly *rejeſted* in the  
 Re-Exhibition; without the ſmalleſt hint given to the  
 reader, that any ſuch were ever in the Teſtimony. And  
 what quarrel had the B-Synod, with theſe two para-  
 graphs? As to the firſt,—do they demur at the *charge*  
 upon this nation, that they *did not reſent* as above ex-  
 preſſed? But this is as ſtrongly laid in the paſſage  
 immediately preceding, which they retain as before-  
 mentioned.—Or do they ſtick at the *inference* from that  
 charge, than which none can be more juſt? But, reaſon  
 or none, the whole is rejeſted.

As to the ſecond of theſe paragraphs; it is well known,  
 that they are againſt finding fault with the *Oath of Allegi-*  
*ance* as then impoſed: Againſt conſidering it, as then im-  
 poſed in place of the *Oath of the Covenant*.—But could  
 the

\* The words here printed in *Italic* have been, through overſight,  
 printed in the Teſtimony with turned *commas*; though they are not the  
 precise expreſſions, but the plain import of the Act of Parliament refer-  
 red to. The difference between printing with turned *commas*, and in  
*Italic* characters, has not been attended unto.

the Revolution-Parliament be ignorant, that this latter oath had been “ imposed by laws and acts of preceding “ Parliaments” in the reforming period? And while all these, as is acknowledged, were *buried* under an *Act Rescissory*,—and this still left *unrepealed*: Could they suppose that the *Oath of Allegiance* would not, and ought not to be taken, as imposed in place of the *Oath of the Covenant* which they left as *already* buried; as well as of others, which they did *then* bury?

C. p. 102. “ But though the Protestant Religion, “ and Presbyterian Church-Government, which had been “ professed and sworn to in our Covenants, national and “ solemn League, betwixt 1638 and 1650, were thus “ established; and though it would appear, from the general clause in the Act of Settlement at the Revolution, “ that the *Acts Rescissory* were included among the *other “ Acts, Statutes, and Proclamations*, mentioned in the “ said clause, and so materially rescinded, *in so far as “ contrary to the said Religion and Church-Government “ established* by said Act; yet it is to be lamented, “ that these *infamous Acts* were not *expressly* rescinded, “ as well as the other wicked Acts mentioned in the Settlement at the Revolution.—*Prelacy* was never considered as contrary to the word of God, and abjured “ by our Covenants: And though Presbyterian Government was expressly declared to be *agreeable to the “ word of God*, yet it was never considered as what is “ solemnly sworn to in these Covenants.—The indignities which had been done to the National Covenant, “ as it was explained in 1638, and to the Solemn “ League and Covenant, and consequently to the Most “ High God the great Party in them, by requiring the “ subjects solemnly to renounce them as *unlawful*, and “ not *binding* upon the conscience; or by declaring it “ treasonable to administer or take them, or to speak or “ write in defence of them; were expressly rescinded. “ But several other Acts, declaring these Covenants unlawful and not binding, were left unrepealed.”

This large paragraph is wholly *new*; never had any place in the Judicial Testimony, till intruded into it by the B.Synod in 1779,—though it is palmed upon the reader,

reader, as the language of the Associate Presbytery in 1736! And when once the intruders of this paragraph shall fairly consider the futility, falsehood and self-contradiction, of which it is compounded; they will certainly be ashamed of it.—But there is no necessity for enlarging upon the subject, in this place; as it has been largely discussed in the second volume of the *Display*: Only, the following remarks may be now made, upon that infamous paragraph.

1. The general design of it is, to paint the *Revolution Settlement* in fairer colours than what are natural. And as it is acknowledged in the *Preface*, “that the sine” and backslidings of this Church and Nation are represented in the *first* Testimony as *grounds of Secession* ;” but, “in the *second* Testimony, are considered as just” grounds of the divine displeasure with this nation, and “as the ordinary forerunners of public calamities :” The consequence is, as to the present plea in behalf of the Revolution-Settlement,—that it is not simply a stretching of laws, in a plea for any of the subjects against the Sovereign; but a most groundless stretching of them, in a plea for the whole generation against God.

2. There is now a great lowering of sails, in coming far down from former pretensions about this matter. A noted publication upon the same side, by the chief promoter of the Burgher-scheme, and which is still recommended by a *note* in the Re-Exhibition †,—bears the following passages ‡, viz. “The Revolution-parliament cannot justly be charged with *omissions*, as to the settlement of the true religion: The true religion, *as it* “*was professed and sworn to* in that second period, was “espoused and professed by the Revolution-parliament: “The true religion, *as professed* in the second Reformation-period from 1638 to 1649, in opposition to the “indignities done to it in the preceding reigns, was professed by the Revolution-parliament; which does, “either more generally, or more formally and expressly, *rescind all* the wicked laws that were made against “any part of the true religion, that was professed in  
“ that

† p. 263. ‡ See the *Display*, p. 88, 89.

“ that period as well as the former : Either in a general  
 “ or more particular way, the civil settlement of religion,  
 “ or the establishment thereof at the Revolution, *re-*  
 “ *scinds all the bad laws* that were made against the true  
 “ religion ; and *ratifies all the good laws* that ever were  
 “ made in favours of it, since the Reformation : The  
 “ *National Covenant, as it was* sworn to and explained  
 “ in 1638, and also the *Solemn League and Covenant,—*  
 “ are, by express acts of the Revolution-parliament,  
 “ vindicated from all the indignities done to them in the  
 “ preceding reigns : The Revolution-parliament do assert  
 “ and avouch the *alone Headship* of our Lord Christ over  
 “ his Church; the *intrinsic power* of the Church, and the  
 “ *divine right* of Presbytery.”——But, though there  
 seems not to be enough of courage now, for re-exhibi-  
 ting these *prodigious extravagancies* in so bold a manner,  
 or for uttering them with so wide a mouth ; yet the same  
 things, upon the matter, are faintly and dubiously insinu-  
 ated in the above paragraph,—under the cover of some  
 insignificant qualifications.

3. The observation here made about *Prelacy*, is a vain  
 repeating of what was said in the preceding paragraph.  
 And there is no advantage gained by adding, about *Pres-*  
*byterian* Government, that it “ was expressly declared  
 “ to be agreeable to the Word of God :” For all the dif-  
 ferent forms of *Church-Government*, just as all the diffe-  
 rent forms of *civil Government*, were reckoned to be so ;  
 and, in the Act of Settlement, *the true Protestant religion*  
 is mentioned as one thing,—while *Presbyterian Church-*  
*Government* is mentioned as another, a different thing.

4. Though the Protestant religion and Presbyterian  
 Church-Government, *which had been* professed and sworn  
 to in our Covenants between 1638 and 1650, were esta-  
 blished at the Revolution : it cannot be pretended, that  
 the slightest notice was then taken of these *as having*  
*been* professed and sworn to in the said period : And no  
 more can be inferred from this, in favour of that reform-  
 ing period,—than from the same *Bible* being used then  
 and now.

But we are further told,—that “ it would appear, that  
 “ the

“ the *Acts Rescissory* were *materially rescinded*” at the Revolution. And if so, the guilt still lying upon the nation about these most wicked acts—will amount to no more than the difference betwixt *materially* and *expressly*; no substantial, but only a circumstantial kind of guilt.—But how do these acts appear to have been materially rescinded? As it is certain that no mention was made of them, among many acts of the persecuting period which were expressly rescinded at the Revolution; it is no less certain, that they stand in the body of our Scots law to this very day,—as really as any acts of the Revolution-parliament. How then would it appear (against all common sense), that they were materially rescinded? It would appear, it seems, that they were so by the *general clause* in the Act of Settlement. But the *Acts Rescissory* were in *no sort* of respect *contrary to the said religion and Church-government established* by the Act of Settlement at the Revolution: For, as the said act left the last reforming period in a state of *utter oblivion*, by passing back to the establishment in 1592; it could not therefore but stand in a perfect agreement with the *Acts Rescissory*, by which that period had been buried into such a state.

After all, as to this doctrine about the *material rescinding* of the Acts Rescissory; how can it consist with what lies in a preceding paragraph of the Testimony, still retained in the Re-Exhibition: That “ all the legal securities given to this Church, in that covenanting period from 1638 to 1650, are *overlooked and passed by*” in the Revolution-settlement; and that “ all the acts of the first session of the first Parliament of king Charles II, together with the *infamous Act Rescissory* anno 1662, —are *left untouched* in this above-mentioned settlement?” And can a *material rescinding* be supposed, in such *overlooking and passing by*, and leaving *untouched*? What miserable inconsistency!

5. It is pretended, in the paragraph now under consideration; that “ the indignities which had been done to the National Covenant as it was explained in 1638, and to the Solemn League and Covenant, and by consequence to the Most High God the great Party in  
“ them,”

“ them,” by some acts referred to,—“ were expressly rescinded.” But what was all the import of rescinding these acts? Just this: That persons in public trust were thereby relieved from an obligation to renounce these Covenants as *in themselves unlawful*, on pain of being *punished as usurpers of his Majesty’s authority*; and the subjects relieved from an immediate liability to be *destroyed as traitors*, for owning them. Here was indeed a great deal done for the lives and liberties of the subjects, who did or might own these Covenants; that they should be no longer persecuted for doing so: But was all this any *express rescinding* of the *indignities* which had been done to these Covenants *themselves*? A qualification is indeed added,—that “ several other acts, declaring these Covenants *unlawful* and not *binding*, were left unrepealed:” Though there was no less reason to imagine all these also *materially repealed*, by the general clause in the Act of Settlement, than that the *Acts Rescissory* were so.—But notwithstanding this qualification, there was still, it seems, some *express rescinding* of the indignities which had been done to our Solemn Covenants! And how can this consist with what lies in the immediately preceding paragraph of the Testimony, still retained in the Re-Exhibition: That “ the indignities done to the *National* and “ *Solemn League and Covenant*, and consequently to the “ Most High God the great party in them, *are never* “ *regarded*; but these Solemn Oaths and Covenants are “ left *buried* under an *Act Rescissory*, and other acts and “ deeds subversive of them?” Can there be a more shocking inconsistency?

Upon the whole,—considering the retained paragraphs (before expressed) as a *text*, and the paragraph now examined as a false and subversive *commentary* upon it; the question is, How came both the text and such a commentary to have a place in the Re-Exhibition? It seems impossible to account for this, unless there be some mystery in the case: Perhaps that the B-Synod found it necessary, in order to satisfy all parties concerned, and keep themselves together; to retain the *text* for pleasing some, and to take in the *commentary* for pleasing others,—as no rational person can be pleased with both.

IX. T. p. 88. "It was the laudable practice, in reforming times, to condemn all steps of defection."

C. p. 102.—"To condemn the most glaring steps of defection." And what a pretty correction is this? It means, if it mean any thing, that various steps of defection were then left uncondemned; only the *most glaring* being condemned. But, though the Testimony could not be supposed to mean (a thing impracticable), that the condemning which then took place—contained a full particular enumeration of all preceding steps of defection: Yet the express condemning of many chief steps, some of which comprehended various particulars,—compared with the general Reformation then set about, of all former abuses; this could not amount to any thing less, than a condemning *all* steps of defection,—all condemned, either formally or materially.

X. T. p. 88. "The General Assembly that met in the year 1690, made no particular acknowledgment of the many heinous backslidings of the former period."

C. p. 103.—"Did not make such a plain and particular acknowledgment of the heinous backslidings of the preceding persecuting period, as might have been expected."

And here the Testimony is corrected, as if it had given a false representation of the case. But the correction is most groundless and disingenuous: For the correctors cannot produce any particular acknowledgment at all, then made of these many heinous backslidings.

It is also particularly observable,—that the B-Synod here confines these backslidings to "the preceding persecuting period;" so as to abstract from all backslidings relative to the *public resolutions*, for about ten years before the persecution began.

XI. T. p. 88, 89. "When many lamentable steps of defection and apostasy were complained of, in a large paper offered to the foresaid Assembly 1690 by Mr *Alexander Shields* and other two ministers; the said Assembly was so far from attempting the redress of their grievances, that they approve the report of their committee for overtures,—calling them unseasonable and impracticable

“ ticable proposals, uncharitable and injurious reflections,  
 “ tending rather to kindle contentions than to compose  
 “ divisions.”

C. p. 103.—“ Calling several of them, &c.”

Now the small correction here made, by inserting the word *several*,—means a charge of falsehood upon the Testimony; as if it carried the reflection upon that Assembly beyond matter of fact. But the charge is entirely groundless; and so, the correction is really abusive.—For though the committee acknowledged, that the said paper had *several good things in it*; (and it had been strange, if a large paper by three honest ministers had not contained several good things,—even in the opinion of that committee): Yet, as to what it proposed a redress of, under the character of their grievances; not merely some or *several* of these, but the same in general, were laid under the foresaid character.

XII. T. p. 89. “ The Assembly 1690, did not assert  
 “ the divine right of Presbytery, and the intrinsic power  
 “ of the Church.”

C. p. 103.—“ Did not, by any formal and express  
 “ act, assert, &c.” But what occasion was there for defaming the Testimony by such an addition, as if it had spoken loosely and beyond the truth? The correctors cannot produce an instance, of the said Assembly having asserted those very important things *at all*,—in any manner that deserves the character of *asserting* them.

XIII. T. p. 89. “ The King’s Commissioner dissolved  
 “ the Assembly 1692: And though their meetings were  
 “ adjourned from time to time by the King’s proclamation,  
 “ till the year 1694; yet there is not any *standing*  
 “ *Testimony* against such sinful encroachments upon  
 “ the rights and liberties of Christ’s spiritual kingdom.”

C. p. 103.—“ Yet there is no such standing Testi-  
 “ mony against such sinful encroachments upon the rights  
 “ and liberties of Christ’s spiritual kingdom, as the case  
 “ required.”

But, in order to support the defamation of the Testimony by this qualifying correction, as if it had misrepresented the matter; the correctors should have pointed

ed out where *some kind* of standing Testimony may be found, in the case referred to. It would be a gross imposing upon people to pretend,—as if a verbal Testimony by the Moderator, at the time of the Commissioner's dissolving the Assembly 1692, could amount to any thing of the nature of a *standing Testimony* upon this head: When that verbal Testimony was not put upon a public record; no adherence to it having been declared, then or afterwards, by the General Assembly.

XIV. T. p. 95, 96. "The united constitution, directly opposite to our Covenant-union, is thereby (*viz.* by the *Oath of Abjuration*) homologate and sworn unto: [And the *said Oath*, together with the *Allegiance*, is substitute in the room of our Solemn National Covenants; which contain the strictest engagements of duty to the Sovereign, and a most solemn renunciation of Popery, and consequently of all Popish pretenders whatsoever."]

Of this quotation, the whole latter part (included in crotchets) is left out and *rejected* by the Re-Exhibition (p. 108.); without any signification of its having ever had a place in the Testimony. The groundless quarrel with it, as respecting the *Oath of Allegiance*, has been already considered in the *eighth* article: And now there is a refusal likewise, of any injury having been done to our Solemn Covenants by the *Oath of Abjuration*!

XV. T. p. 121. "A like injury has been done to truth, by the committee's judging,—[that the expressions objected against, are only *too high* on the side of self-love."]

C. p. 124.—"Are only *too high* on the side of self-love; which amounts to no more, than that he had expressed the truth in equivocal and suspicious terms."

That part of the above passage from the Testimony which is inclosed in crotchets, belongs to the judgment of the Assembly's committee,—about Mr Campbell's scheme of self-love: While the *addition* now made, here distinguished by *Italic* characters, is brought in as a necessary illustration; for correcting a supposed defect in the Testimony. And let any body who pleases take it  
for

for an illustration ; that an expressing of the truth in *equivocal* and *suspicious terms*, is the same thing with a speaking *only too high* on the side of the truth!—The Testimony, in what follows the above passage, gives a very different illustration ; “ An high expression, in common language, being nothing else but truth set in a “ *strong light*.”

But there is a singular oddness of this affair. For the said addition (though only made by the B-Synod) is brought in, with continued marks of quotation, as a part of the Committee’s judgment ; even incorporated into the same sentence with their language : So that the Committee is represented as giving their judgment, in the way of defaming their own judgment !

XVI. T. p. 144. “ Though Popish errors and delusions abound more and more, and the abominable idolatry of the *mass* is openly frequented in many corners of this land ; yet no proper nor effectual remedies are applied against this growing evil : [And particularly, church-discipline is not duly exercised against Papists ; according to former laudable acts and constitutions of this Church.]”

C. p. 140.—“ Against this growing evil, by either “ Church or State.”

That part of the above quotation from the Testimony which is inclosed in crotchets, is left out and *rejected* by the Re-Examination ; and the place of it is supplied by these words, *by either Church or State*.—The reason of this conduct appears inconceivable ; farther than as it serves for rubbing a reflection upon the Testimony, of its speaking idly or improperly in what is now rejected.

XVII. T. p. 162. “ They (the Associate Presbytery) “ hereby declare their *adherence* to the several *Testimonies*, *Declarations* and *Warnings*,—emitted in behalf “ of the Covenanted Reformation of this Church, from “ the year 1650 to the year 1688.”

C. 152.—“ Their *adherence* to the several regular “ and Scriptural *Testimonies*, &c.”

And here is a qualifying correction of a supposed extravagance in the Testimony ; by inserting the words,  
regular

*regular and scriptural*.—But what need was there of this addition? Is not the *adherence* sufficiently confined to what was *regular and scriptural* in these Testimonies, Declarations and Warnings; by the qualification, of their being “emitted in behalf of the Covenanted Reformation of this Church?” And must an indefinite reflection be rubbed upon any of them really *so emitted*, as if they had been *irregular and unscriptural*?

XVIII. T. p. 162. “They (the Associate Presbytery) hereby declare their *adherence* to the several *Testimonies*, whether given in by representations and petitions to the several General Assemblies, or otherwise emitted and published since the year 1688,—against the several sinful omissions of the Judicatories of this Church above mentioned; or the several steps of declining and backsliding in this present age, from a Covenanted Reformation once attained unto.”

C. p. 152.—“Their *adherence* to the several *Testimonies*, &c. [in so far alienably as these are calculated to maintain the Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government of the Church of Scotland, founded on the Word of God.]”

And here again, by the addition inclosed in crotchets, there is a qualifying Correction of a supposed extravagance in the Testimony.—But is not the *adherence* sufficiently limited; in its respecting these Testimonies only as against the *sinful omissions*, with the *several steps of declining and backsliding* therein mentioned?

The truth of the matter is,—that whatever need the Testimony may have of being *defended*, with regard to this and the foregoing article; it stands in no need at all of being *amended*.

## C O N C L U S I O N.

THE fraudulent and gross abuses which have been committed, in the *Re-Exhibition*, upon the *Secession-Testimony* in general, with the *Judicial Act and Testimony* in particular,—have now been considered. And a lamentable case it is, that the authors thereof should have taken

taken such a course,—for promoting their favourite cause about the Burgeſſs-oath, which they now explicitly profeſs ; yet without gaining any real advantage by it, to that cauſe. For however much any particular corrections of the Teſtimony, as theſe now made, may reconcile it to their *imaginary* ſcheme about the meaning and effect of the Burgeſſs-oath among Seceders ; yet nothing leſs can answer unto the real meaning and effect thereof, —nothing leſs than a giving up with that Teſtimony altogether, as in a ſtate of *Seceſſion* from the Eſtabliſhed Church : While the B-Synod, in order to make room for the *Burgeſſs-oath*, has already thrown the *Renovation of our Solemn Covenants* quite out of doors.

Had theſe abuſes been executed in a fair and open manner, with a plain and particular account of them as they ſeverally occur,—that the reader might judge for himſelf, betwixt the *old* and *new* State of the Teſtimony ; the fault had been of far leſs aggravation. But the *fraudulent adulterating* of it, which has been conſidered, is a moſt unexampled preſumption ; as the Churches of *England* and *Scotland*, after all the corruption which they are funk into,—have not yet been left to corrupt their *Homilies*, *Articles* or *Confeſſion* : And it would be as much as one's life were worth, to perpetrate ſuch forgeries upon any deed of private rights among men,—as are now committed upon the Judicial Teſtimony. It will be ſtrange if ſome, at leaſt, of the people belonging to the B-Synod, ſhall not now have their eyes opened ; to ſee how they are impoſed upon, and have been triſled with for many years back.

But of this Teſtimony, it is to be hoped, the Lord will continue to take a ſpecial providential care.—It was formed and emitted above 40 years ago, under a very diſmal ſtate of the Reformation-interest, as a *banner* given to be *displayed becauſe of the truth*. It was ſet up as a banner diſplayed for God, in ſtating the grounds of his controverſy with a backſliding generation ; and for the now-buried Reformation-cause, which has been abundantly

dantly sealed with the blood of martyrs. By this Testimony the Lord Christ did, as it were, take a new infeoffment of our land for his inheritance; which, as may be hoped, he will not give up with. It was set forth as an ensign,—for gathering and forming into a witnessing-body, the friends of a covenanted Reformation in these lands. It hath accordingly proved a blessed mean for that end, through many corners; in the course of many years bygone. It has proved a mean, among the favourers of the dust of Zion, for gathering *bone to his bone*: And as, in a great measure, *sinews and flesh* have come up upon them, and the *skin covered them above*; so when the Lord's time comes for causing *breath to enter into* the witnessing-body, more eminently than at present,—that Testimony will be cleared from all abuses, ignominy and reproach.—In the mean time, the Author of this Display, who has been acquainted with it from the beginning,—and knew it to have been the fruit of many prayers, under much of the Lord's countenance; and who hopefully wishes that he may be kept to the end in a state of adherence to it, as also to all the contendings for it in former proceedings of the Associate Synod; craves leave to express his thankfulness for being yet spared—in a capacity for contributing this new endeavour to support its just Reputation.

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A SYNOD-SERMON *considered* :

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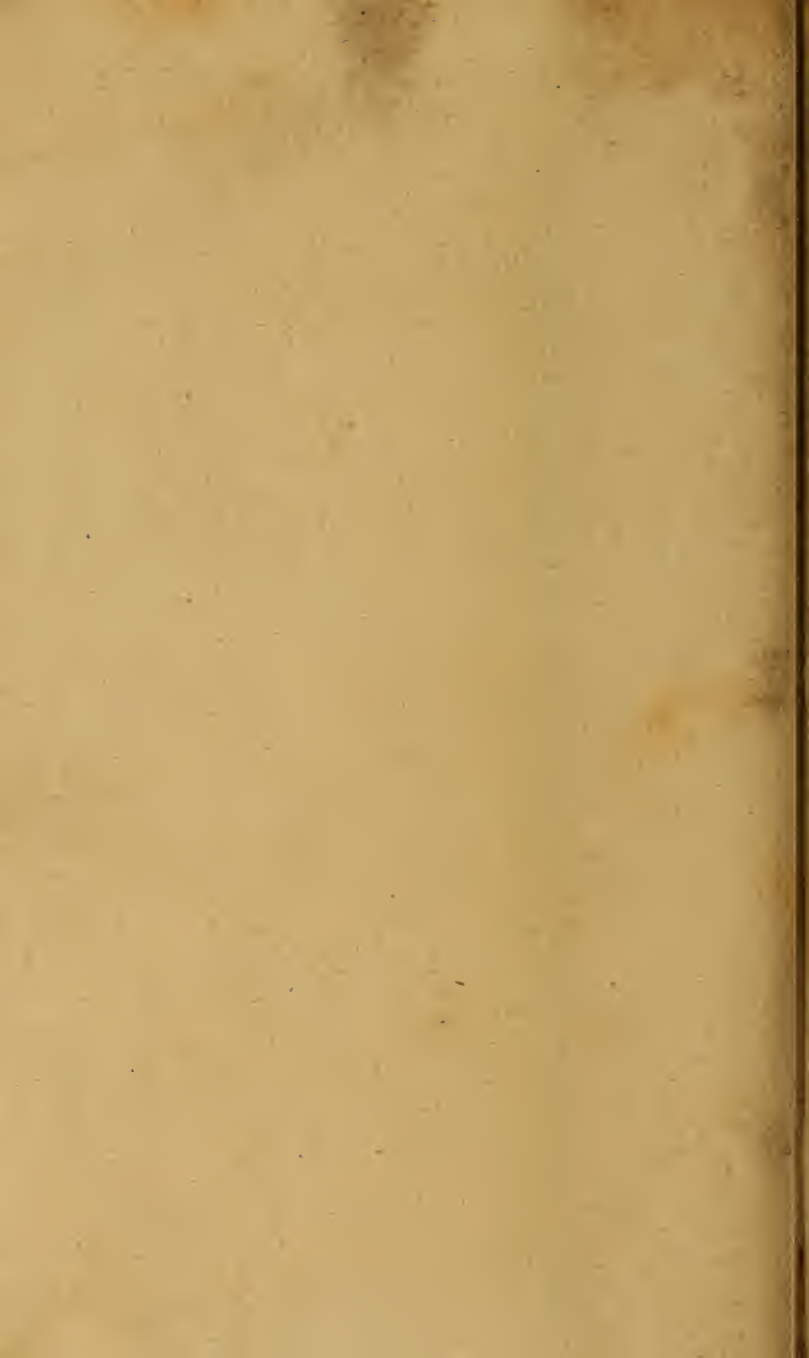
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